



## ORANGE RIVER GORGE: PREMIUM & GROUP PACKAGES

<b>Where:</b>	Onseepkans, N Cape
<b>When:</b>	All year round
<b>Difficulty:</b>	Class 2 – 4. All skill levels
<b>Season:</b>	All year round
<b>Distance Paddled:</b>	35km
<b>Minimum age:</b>	8 years at low water, 12 years at higher levels



## OVERVIEW

Starting near Pofadder in the Northern Cape, this section of the river is arguably the best on the Orange River and offers a variety of conditions, from flat water with flowing channels, lots of exciting small rapids and a few 'Big Ones' to get the adrenaline flowing.

The scenery is awesome with highlights being the Orange Gorge and the Richie Falls – the second highest waterfall on the river, after Augrabies. This area has been designated as pristine wilderness and of extreme biodiversity importance and it is our privilege to be able to share it with our clients.

At high water, it becomes an exciting whitewater trip. We use inflatable two-person boats that are easy to paddle and steer. We also have rafts that are very stable and perfect for less confident paddlers (dependent on water level – medium to high level only). Our standard trips are four days and five nights long - we camp for three nights on the river and spend two at the base camp. Three-day, four-night trips are also available and longer expeditions can be arranged for group bookings

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## THE TRIP

Gravity's base camp, Wild Paradise Riverside Camp, is set on the banks of the river and your guides will meet you here on the evening before your trip begins. There is ample grass to set up your camping spot for the night and this is also where you will leave your vehicle whilst you are on the river with us. There are basic ablutions, including flush loos, a bar service and easy access to the water for a refreshing dip or trying your hand at catching (and releasing) some Yellowfish. **Your trip price includes TWO nights in base camp and ALL meals.**

You also have the option to upgrade to a walk-in canvas dome tent with mattresses (subject to availability and only for the two nights in base camp). We encourage you to arrive a day or two early or leave a day or two later to enjoy this beautiful part of the world more fully.

We cover just over 35kms during the trip so there is ample time to relax, read your book or explore the camp surroundings. Each trip is run as a self-contained wilderness expedition - we carry everything we need and take everything back out again at the end. This trip will provide you with a complete break from reality – no electricity, cell phones, computers and no stress. It is truly an opportunity to recharge your batteries and reconnect with yourself and nature. We make our way down river, choosing a different campsite each night. All you need to provide is your personal gear and drinks of your choice. All meals are included, as are qualified guides, boating and safety equipment. On the evening before your trip begins, you will be welcomed to the Gravity base camp by your guides. Relax and enjoy the view over the river or have a drink at the bar. You'll enjoy a light supper under the starry night sky around the campfire and your guides will give you advice on how best to pack your dry bags for your trip down river. Next morning, after a simple breakfast, before getting on the water you'll also have a thorough safety briefing and some paddling instruction.



Then, it's time to get going for three or four days of relaxation and excitement! The first day's paddling consists mainly of flowing channels and flat water ending with Scorpion. Day 2 brings bigger rapids and an evening walk to view the amazing Ritchie Falls (time and season permitting). Day 3 is full of excitement with a challenging portage around the Falls which usually take up most of the morning, carrying & lowering the boats in above '42 man hole'. 'Big Bunny' and 'Dolly Parton' rapids follow before you reach camp for the evening. As you leave the gorge on day 4, things mellow out once again and the last section is just gentle paddle with mountains increasing in size around you. The group will be met at the take-out after lunch and transported back to base camp to enjoy a final meal around the campfire. (Above itinerary may change slightly according to trip, season and water level).

#### **Sample Itinerary (4 day, 5 night trip)**

**Day 1:** Wild Paradise Riverside Camp. Camping and dinner included.

Day 2: Pack up, safety briefing and start paddling. Wild Camp on banks. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included.

Day 3: On river, wild camp on banks. Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 4: On river, wild camp on banks. Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 5: On river, take out after lunch and transfer back to Wild Paradise for last night. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included

Day 6: Depart at leisure. Light breakfast included.

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Visit our website at [www.gravity.co.za](http://www.gravity.co.za) for more info and pictures.

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## PRICELIST

We have the following different packages including a low season discount and various optional add-ons - let us know if you have questions. Ask about our River Safari and school and student discounted rates.

### 1. Premium Package: The most popular option with our legendary menu. Join a scheduled trip or get a group together

4 day, 5 night trip	High season (school holidays)	Low season
Adults	R6,950 pp	R6,000 pp
Children under 18	R5,900 pp	R5,270 pp
3 day, 4 night trip	High season (school holidays)	Low season
Adults	R6,550 pp	R5,750 pp
Children under 18	R5,600 pp	R5,175 pp

Minimum group size of 12. Maximum group size of 24. Includes camping, all meals, qualified guides, boating and safety equipment and VAT. Exclusive groups – min 20 in high season and 14 in low season.

### 2. Group Package: Discounted trip with a simpler menu – the best value option if you have a group of 20 or more.

4 day, 5 night trip	
Adults	R5,950 pp
Children under 18	R5,450 pp
3 day, 4 night trip	
Adults	R5,250 pp
Children under 18	R4,750 pp

Minimum group size of 20. Maximum group size of 30. Includes camping, all meals, qualified guides, boating and safety equipment and VAT.

### Optional Add-ons

Porter Boater	Maximum 2 per group, if available	R3,950 each for trip
<i>The porter boater will help carry extra gear, help to set up and break down camp and help to pack and unpack your boats. This is a participative trip, so it is important to note that the guide will HELP you, not do everything for you... Porter boaters subject to availability, max 2 per trip.</i>		
Camping set	Tent, roll mats (NOT mattresses)	R950 pp for trip
Upgrade to dome tent accommodation		R275 pp

### 3. River Safari Trips

*This is an all-inclusive package aimed at those who prefer glamping to camping! Very small group sizes and an upgraded level of comfort and cuisine make this the ultimate river experience. The price per person varies according to group size so ask us for more info if you are interested in this option.*



## Why Gravity?

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Gravity has an unwavering attitude towards quality and safety on all of their trips – some of the aspects which make Gravity one of the leading adventure companies in SA include the following;

- All inclusive – **2 nights in base camp and ALL meals** – no hidden extras
- Small groups – for safety and environmental reasons
- Only qualified guides, in the recommended guide: client ratios
- Top notch equipment
- The best in bush cuisine – all fresh prepared on river
- Undiscovered sections of river – no crowds
- No border crossings or passports

### **Are you a member of APA?**

Yes, we are Operating Members of APA and our guides are APA members, trained, qualified and experienced.

### **Do you have your SAMSA Licence to Operate?**

Yes, we do, we were the first rafting operator to become compliant with the law.

### **What does the trip include?**

It includes all of your meals, from the evening of your arrival, to a light breakfast on the morning of your departure, camping at base camp on your first and last nights, 4 full days and 3 nights on river (3 days and 2 nights if doing a 3 day, 4 night trip), qualified and experienced guides, all boating and safety equipment and no, you don't have to bring your own loo paper! We also provide crockery and cutlery.

### **How do I get up to the river?**

You can drive up in your own vehicle or we can recommend a vehicle rental company or coach with driver. The road is a good tar road all the way up from Cape Town and takes around 9 hours. The road is also good tar coming in from the Gauteng direction. The last section of +/- 50 kms to the camp is usually a good dirt road. This road does, however, become difficult after heavy rain (not common in this area). We recommend that you contact the Pofadder Police Station (tel: 054 933 0022) or Onseepkans Police Station (054 951 0002) to check the condition of the road. Full directions will be supplied on confirmation of booking. We can also make recommend accommodation *en route* for you if you'd like to do the drive over two days. Fly in tours can also be arranged.

### **Do I need my passport?**

No, you don't. The trip starts and ends on the South African side so no border crossing is required.

### **What are the camping facilities like?**

Our base camp, Wild Paradise, is a grassed campsite on the river-banks. Rustic ablutions and flush toilets are provided. On river, we'll be free camping – all catering equipment is supplied. You can also upgrade to a dome tent or to a nearby guest house (subject to availability) for the nights in base camp.

### **What about ablutions?**

On river, your guide will give you a thorough briefing regarding ablution procedures. Generally, you will wash in the river. We usually use the environmentally friendly 'cat hole' toilet method (don't worry – your guide will explain!) but, depending on the season and the size of your group, may also provide a porta-loo.

### **What do I need to bring?**

A full kit list will be supplied on confirmation of booking. Remember that whatever you choose to bring will get very dirty so don't bring your new clothes!

### **Will my clothes & sleeping bags get wet?**

There are no guarantees on a river trip but it's extremely unlikely - you will be supplied with a dry-bag, which will keep your clothes dry even if the bag lands in the water. You can also pack your clothes into black bags inside the dry bags to make sure. Your guides will explain to you the best way to pack your bags. Space is sufficient but limited so don't bring too much with you.

### **Can I bring my camera?**

Yes. Although there can be no guarantees on a river trip, we do provide watertight dry buckets for cameras, binoculars etc.

### **Do I need to be fit?**

Although this is an exciting trip, the distance covered over the four days is not very long (about 37kms) so you don't have to be an athlete to do the trip. A reasonable level of fitness and good health is required, though. Temperatures can be extreme, especially in summer so please bear this in mind. There is no age limit but you should familiarise yourself with what the trip entails and make an informed decision on your ability to participate, based on your own fitness. Our general recommendation is a minimum age of 8 years and a maximum of 70. Expectant mothers are welcome – up to about 4 months along. This is a participative trip and you can expect to help carry gear and boats during the portage around Ritchie Falls – this can be on the tough side so please let us know if this may be a challenge for you and we will make a plan.

### **What if I'm not a strong swimmer?**

Each client is issued with a PFD ('Lifejacket') and is instructed on how to handle him or herself in the water, you don't need to be a strong swimmer but please let us know if you are not confident in the water. There is always the option to walk around rapids you are not happy to do. You also have the option of requesting a very stable raft, which is steered by a guide (dependent on water level – medium and high levels only)

### **Is it difficult to steer the boats? Will I fall out?**

We use 2 person inflatable 'cros' that are very stable and easy to paddle, even for beginners. This section of river has lots of fun rapids and a few challenging runs. There is therefore quite a good chance that you'll have at least one swim! You will be equipped with a PFD ('lifejacket') and will have been given instruction on exactly how to behave if you fall out of your boat. We also use only highly trained guides who will be on hand to rescue you if required. You also have the option of requesting our very stable 5-person raft, which is steered by a guide (dependent on water level and availability – medium and high levels only).

### **Is it safe? What about if I hurt myself?**

Whilst there is an inherent element of risk in every adventure, running rivers with our professional guides should not be considered dangerous. Our guides are all trained in First Aid and we carry a First Aid kit. It is your responsibility to inform the guides about any allergies or medical conditions you may have and to make sure you have any personal medication with you (e.g. asthma pumps, allergy medication etc.). This trip does take place in a remote wilderness environment where evacuation can be difficult and time consuming, but we have put plans in place to cope with any emergencies. There is cell coverage from high points at various locations along the river. In general, evacuation by helicopter is not possible due to the

rough terrain and the distance from the nearest helicopter but in our 19 years of operation, we have not needed it!

### **What about my drinks?**

Gravity provides all meals, but you can bring your own choice of drinks. We will supply you with cooler boxes. It's also a good idea to bring drink mix such as Game, which can be mixed with water – purified water will be supplied at each stop.

### **Is the water safe to drink?**

Generally, the water is clean enough to drink but we use water purification tablets to be on the safe side.

### **What will the weather be like?**

In summer (September-April), days are very hot (30-40 degrees) and the nights are also warm. In between seasons, the days are still warm but the nights can be quite cool - a change of warm clothing and a good sleeping bag are required. In winter (June-August), days are warm (20-25 degrees) and nights (and water) are cold. The rainy season is late summer but since this is a semi-arid region, rain is not a frequent occurrence. Thunderstorms do sometimes occur but are usually over quickly.

### **What will the meals be like?**

We pride ourselves on providing our clients with the best in bush cuisine. All meals are prepared fresh on the river and consist of hearty, healthy main courses, followed by dessert. Sundowner snacks are also served on the Premium trip. We suggest you bring along a selection of snacks for in between meals. Biltong, droewors, peanut brittle and hard sweets work well.

### **I have specific dietary requirements, can you cater to them?**

We are very happy to cater for vegetarians and those requiring halaal meats. For other dietary requirements and preferences, we will supply you with our menu so that you can bring along additional items or substitutions. You can chat with your Trip Leader and discuss how you'd like him/her to prepare your food if necessary. If your food requirements are complicated, we ask that you consult with us before the trip so that we can come up with the best solution for you.

### **Why restrict group sizes?**

We generally limit our group sizes to less than 24 per group - small groups are easier to control and, therefore, safer and the negative impact on the environment is minimised. Finally, we have found that a small group size results in a better and more intimate trip for our clients. Exclusive groups can be larger in number.

### **Any other restrictions?**

The APA code of safety requires us to warn you against consuming alcohol or drugs in the 8 hours preceding the trip as well as at all times on the water.

### **How do I book?**

To book, we will need a completed booking form as well as a 40% deposit into the following account: Gravity River Tours, FNB, Claremont branch: 204209, account: 623 790 739 60. Your booking is NOT confirmed until we have received both completed the form and payment. Please make sure to reference your deposit with your name and the dates of your trip e.g. "Smith Gorge Dec 12-15".



**More Questions? Give us a call!**

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